



Grant Blvd sources vintage or used fabric from Goodwill and the Salvation Army | Photo source [Andrew Antwi/Grant Blvd](#)

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## SUSTAINABLE CLOTHING COMPANY HELPS THE FORMERLY INCARCERATED WITH NEW CAREERS

 FASHION & BEAUTY

### Philadelphia-based Grant Blvd sources vintage and used fabric and largely hires formerly incarcerated people

**Spotted:** Philadelphia-based clothing startup Grant Blvd has just been awarded a grant from the singer Beyoncé. Many people may not be aware that Beyoncé has a philanthropic organisation, BeyGood, dedicated to backing black-owned businesses that are working towards racial justice. At first glance, Grant Blvd, a fashion label that creates sexy, edgy outfits from old clothes and unwanted fabric, may not seem like a social justice pioneer, but a closer look reveals that the company largely hires formerly incarcerated people.

Grant Blvd sources vintage or used fabric from Goodwill and the Salvation Army, and from companies that have bolts of fabric other brands don't want, using fabrics that would otherwise end up in a landfill. Unlike a traditional garment factory, where each person makes the same design over and over, Grant Blvd's sewers split up the work based on which garments they would most like to make and what their particular expertise is.

The company was founded by Kimberly McGlonn, who has a PhD in education and spent 18 years as an English teacher. She sees fashion design as an opportunity to focus on two issues she's particularly passionate about — climate change and employment opportunities for those who were formerly incarcerated.

[McGlonn explains](#) that she's, "hyperfocused on telling a story about the state of the planet from an intersectional perspective. Moving beyond the damage the fashion industry does to the environment to the ways in which our systems are outgrowths of colonialism that oppress people of colour." It is this focus that attracted the \$10,000 (€8,411) grant from BeyGood, which the company will use to expand further.

Grant Blvd joins a host of other clothing brands developing ways to reduce, reuse and recycle the world's growing mountain of clothing waste. Some of the innovations in this space that we have recently covered on Springwise include sustainable shoes made from [dog hair](#) and [a brand that only manufactures what it sells](#).

Written By: Lisa Magloff

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Website: [grantblvd.com](http://grantblvd.com)

Contact: [grantblvd.com/pages/contact-us](http://grantblvd.com/pages/contact-us)

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### **Takeaway:**

The statistics around clothing waste are not encouraging – in the UK alone, each person produces around 3.1kg of textile waste every year, with just only 0.3 kg recycled and 0.4 kg reused. Grant Blvd is demonstrating that not only can this waste be turned into fashionable new items, but this can be done using a model that adds human value to the product cycle as well. This could be a model for other businesses too – developing both sustainability and human capital at the same time.